

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Original) An aqueous dispersion obtainable by free-radical polymerization of
  - a) at least one N-vinyl-containing monomer and/or at least one (meth)acrylamide monomer
  - b) at least one polymeric dispersant
  - c) at least one polymeric precipitation agent
  - d) at least one crosslinker
  - e) optionally further monomers
  - f) optionally at least one regulator
  - g) optionally a buffer substance

where the weight ratio of b) to c) is in the range from 1:50 to 1:0.02.

2. (Original) A dispersion as claimed in claim 1, wherein the weight ratio of b) to c) is in the range from 1:20 to 1:0.05.

3. (Currently Amended) A dispersion as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein N-vinylamides and/or N-vinylactams and/or (meth)acrylamide monomers chosen from the group consisting of acrylamide, 2-acrylamidoglycolic acid, N-(tris(hydroxymethyl)methyl)acrylamide, N-hydroxymethylacrylamide, N-methylacrylamide, N-isopropylacrylamide, 2-acrylamido-2-methyl-1-propanesulfonic acid methacrylamide, N-ethyl-methacrylamide, N-hydroxymethylmethacrylamide, N-(2-hydroxypropyl)methacrylamide,

N-methylmethacrylamide,  
N-isobutoxymethylacrylamide,  
N-methoxymethylmethacrylamide  
are used as monomer a).

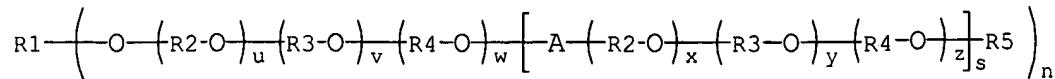
4. (Currently Amended) A dispersion as claimed in ~~claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein monomer a) is chosen from the group consisting of acrylamide, methacrylamide, N-hydroxymethylacrylamide, N-(2-hydroxypropyl)methacrylamide, N-hydroxymethylmethacrylamide, N-isopropylacrylamide.

5. (Currently Amended) A dispersion as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1, wherein the polymeric dispersant b) is chosen from the group consisting of polyvinyl acetate, polyalkylene glycols, in particular polyethylene glycols, polyvinyl alcohol, polyvinylpyridine, polyethyleneimine, polyvinylimidazole, polyvinylsuccinimide and polydiallyldimethylammonium chloride, polyvinylpyrrolidone, polymers which comprise at least 5% by weight of vinylpyrrolidone units, polymers which comprise at least 50% by weight of vinyl alcohol units, oligosaccharides, polysaccharides, oxidatively, hydrolytically or enzymatically degraded polysaccharides, chemically modified oligo- or polysaccharides, such as, in particular, carboxymethylcellulose, water-soluble starch and starch derivatives, starch esters, starch xanthanogenates, starch acetates, dextran, and mixtures thereof.

6. (Currently Amended) A dispersion as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, wherein polymers which comprise at least 5% by weight of vinylpyrrolidone units and/or polyvinylpyrrolidone are used as polymeric dispersant b).

7. (Currently Amended) A dispersion as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein a water-soluble polyether-containing compound is used as polymeric precipitation agent c).

8. (Currently Amended) A dispersion as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1, wherein a water-soluble polyether-containing compound of the following formula (Ib) is used as polymeric precipitation agent c):



(Ib)

in which the variables, independently of one another, have the following meanings:

$R^1$  is hydrogen,  $C_1-C_{24}$ -alkyl,  $R^6-C(=O)-$ ,  $R^6-NH-C(=O)-$ , polyalcohol radical;

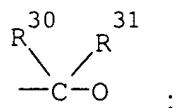
$R^5$  is hydrogen,  $C_1-C_{24}$ -alkyl,  $R^6-C(=O)-$ ,  $R^6-NH-C(=O)-$ ;

$R^2$  to  $R^4$  are  $-(CH_2)_2-$ ,  $-(CH_2)_3-$ ,  $-(CH_2)_4-$ ,  $-CH_2-CH(R^6)-$ ,  $-CH_2-CHOR^7-CH_2-$ ;

$R^6$  is  $C_1-C_{24}$ -alkyl;

$R^7$  is hydrogen,  $C_1-C_{24}$ -alkyl,  $R^6-C(=O)-$ ,  $R^6-NH-C(=O)-$ ;

$A$  is  $-C(=O)-O$ ,  $-C(=O)-B-C(=O)-O$ ,  $-CH_2-CH(-OH)-B-CH(-OH)-CH_2-O$ ,  $-C(=O)-NH-B-NH-C(=O)-O$ ;



$B$  is  $-(CH_2)_t-$ , arylene, optionally substituted;

$R^{30}, R^{31}$  are hydrogen,  $C_1-C_{24}$ -alkyl,  $C_1-C_{24}$ -hydroxyalkyl, benzyl or phenyl;

$n$  is 1 when  $R^1$  is not a polyalcohol radical or

$n$  is 1 to 1000 when  $R^1$  is a polyalcohol radical

$s = 0$  to 1000;  $t = 1$  to 12;  $u = 1$  to 5000;  $v = 0$  to 5000;  $w = 0$  to 5000;  $x = 0$  to 5000;

$y = 0$  to 5000;  $z = 0$  to 5000.

9. (Currently Amended) A dispersion as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 8~~ claim 1, wherein polyalkylene glycols are used as polymeric precipitation agent c).

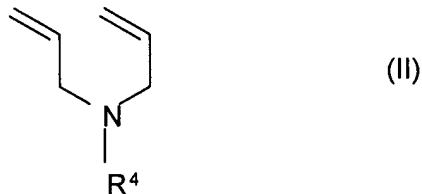
10. (Currently Amended) A dispersion of ~~claims 1 to 9~~ claim 1, wherein polyethylene glycol (PEG) is used as polymeric precipitation agent c).

11. (Currently Amended) A dispersion as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 10~~ claim 1, wherein a compound with a molecular weight of from 300 to 100 000, preferably 1000 to 30 000, in particular 1000 to 10 000, is used as polymeric precipitation agent c).

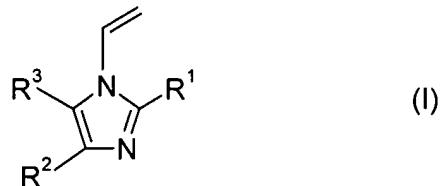
12. (Currently Amended) A dispersion as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 11~~ claim 1, wherein the weight ratio of the sum of b) and c) to the sum of the remaining monomers is in the range from 10 : 1 to 1 : 0.1.

13. (Currently Amended) A dispersion as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 12~~ claim 1, wherein a cationic and/or a quaternizable monomer is used as further monomer e).

14. (Original) A dispersion as claimed in claim 13, wherein a diallylamine of the formula (II), in which R<sup>4</sup> is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>24</sub>-alkyl is used as further monomer e)



15. (Original) A dispersion as claimed in claim 13, wherein an N-vinylimidazole derivative of the formula (II) in which R<sup>1</sup> to R<sup>3</sup> is hydrogen, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl or phenyl is used as further monomer e).



16. (Currently Amended) A dispersion as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 15~~ claim 1, wherein polymers which comprise at least 5% by weight of vinylpyrrolidone units and/or polyvinylpyrrolidone are used as polymeric dispersant b), and polyethylene glycol is used as precipitation agent c).

17. (Currently Amended) An aqueous solution obtainable by diluting the dispersion as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 16~~ claim 1 with water.

18. (Original) A process for the preparation of aqueous dispersions where

- a) at least one N-vinyl-containing monomer and/or at least one (meth)acrylamide monomer
- b) at least one polymeric dispersant
- c) at least one precipitation agent
- d) at least one crosslinker
- e) optionally further monomers
- g) optionally a buffer substance

are reacted in the presence of at least one regulator f) and the weight ratio of b) to c) is in the range from 1:50 to 1:0.02.

19. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 18, wherein a multifunctional regulator is used as regulator f).

20. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 18, wherein the resulting dispersion is subjected to hydrolysis.

21. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 20, wherein the hydrolysis is carried out up to a content of amines in the polymer of < 20 mol%, based on component (a).

22. (Currently Amended) The use of aqueous dispersions as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 17~~ claim 1 in cosmetic preparations, in particular in hair cosmetic preparations.

23. (Original) The use of aqueous dispersions obtainable by free-radical polymerization of

- a) at least one (meth)acrylamide monomer and optionally at least one N-vinyl-containing monomer
- b) at least one polymeric dispersant
- c) at least one polymeric precipitation agent
- e) optionally further monomers
- f) optionally at least one regulator
- g) optionally in the presence of a buffer substance

where the weight ratio of b) to c) is in the range from 1:50 to 1:0.02 in cosmetic preparations, in particular in hair cosmetic preparations.

24. (Currently Amended) The use as claimed in claim 23, where the at least one monomer a) is as defined in ~~claims 3 and 4~~ claim 3.

25. (Currently Amended) The use as claimed in ~~claims 23 and 24~~ claim 23, where the polymeric dispersant b) and the polymeric precipitation reagent c) are as defined in ~~claims 2 and 5 to 12 and 16~~ claim 2.

26. (Currently Amended) The use as claimed in ~~claims 23 to 25~~ claim 23, where the further monomer e) is as defined in ~~claims 13 to 15~~ claim 13.

27. (Currently Amended) The use as claimed in ~~claims 22 to 26~~ claim 22 as thickener ~~claim 22~~.

28. (Currently Amended) The use as claimed in ~~claims 22 to 26~~ claim 22 as conditioning agent.

29. (Currently Amended) A method of increasing the viscosity of a preparation by adding an aqueous dispersion according to ~~one of claims 1 to 17~~ claim 1 or by adding an aqueous dispersion according to ~~claims 23 to 26~~ claim 23 to the preparation and the addition of water.

30. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein at least 2 parts by weight of water, based on the dispersion, are added to the preparation.

31. (Currently Amended) A cosmetic composition comprising, in a cosmetically acceptable medium, at least one aqueous dispersion as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 17~~ claim 1.

32. (Currently Amended) A cosmetic composition comprising, in a cosmetically acceptable medium, at least one aqueous dispersion obtainable by free-radical polymerization of

a) at least one (meth)acrylamide monomer and optionally at least one N-vinyl-containing monomer

- b) at least one polymeric dispersant
- c) at least one polymeric precipitation agent
- e) optionally further monomers
- f) optionally at least one regulator
- g) optionally in the presence of a buffer substance

where the weight ratio of b) to c) is in the range from 1:50 to 1:0.02 and where the at least one monomer a) is as defined in ~~claims 3 and 4~~ claim 3, the polymeric dispersant b) and the polymeric precipitation reagent c) are as defined in ~~claims 2 and 5 to 12 and 16~~ claim 2 and the further monomer e) is as defined in ~~claims 13 to 15~~ claim 13.